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Live encounters

P O E T R Y & W R I T I N G

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ARTWORK BY IRISH ARTIST EMMA BARONE

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Live Encounters is a not-for-profit free online magazine that was founded in 2009 in Bali, Indonesia. It showcases some of the best writing from around the world. Civil and human rights activists, animal rights activists, poets, writers, journalists, social workers and more have contributed their time and knowledge for the benefit of the readers of the magazine.

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HELENE CARDONA
Two excerpts from *Beyond Elsewhere* (White Pine Press, 2016), recipient of a Hemingway Grant, a narrative poem by Gabriel Arnou-Laujeac, translated from the French (Plus loin qu'ailleurs, Éditions du Cygne, 2013) by Hélène Cardona

Thomas McCarthy was born in Co. Waterford in 1954 and educated at University College Cork. He has published *The First Convention* (1978), *The Lost Province* (1996) and *Merchant Prince* (2005) as well as a number of other collections. He has won the Patrick Kavanagh Award, the Alice Hunt Bartlett Prize and the O'Shaughnessy Prize for Poetry. He worked for many years at Cork City Libraries, retiring in 2014 to write fulltime. He is a member of Aosdana. His collection, *Pandemonium*, will be published by Carcanet Press in November.



THIS BARE TREE

This bare tree is doing its best; withholding its
Impulse to comment despite the freshening breeze.
All the chirping leaves it turned over are lost now
And nothing is left of the prodigious summer shadows,

Not even the memory. For a tree has no memory,
Or at least no memory that it may articulate
In the company of others. Like your head going bald
This tree has no comment to make on the shade.

A CORK FOG

Let us consider this heavy fog, so quick and Elizabethan
A thing, an after-effect of last month's empire

That just passed over the brow of the hill
In a splendour of October brass. Now, even

Sunlit braids of golden thread that trailed
In the wake of musterings and leafy retreats,

Even braid, is invisible in this November fog;
And in its stead are these assemblies of grey, these

Shadows of trees like so many Viking long boats
Nudging forward in the unremarkable shallows.

Here, the Earl of Grafton fell. You heard the splash
As his efforts failed; and here, a Gael tumbled into slime

With the indecency of a cormorant, as a ball from Colonel
Churchill's regiment of foot found its mark beneath fog.

That's the way it is with this heavy mist: it makes
An enemy of mere stone and it leaves chroniclers at ease –

Which is why I like to sit at this long table with a stiff drink
Or two. Listen, what falls in fog is not of this world.

A little-known true story, **Dr Felix Kersten** was masseur to **Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler** (head of the SS & Gestapo) during the Second World War. Despite threats to his life, he used his influence over the Reichsführer to secure the release of tens, possibly hundreds of thousands, of prisoners. Accused of collaboration after the war, his name was largely cleared and he received high honours from several European countries.

Anne M Carson's poetry has been published internationally and widely in Australia. *Removing the Kimono*, was published in 2013 and amongst other awards, she was shortlisted for the 2015 Ron Pretty Poetry Prize. She serves as Director Arts on the Board of Ondru and is seeking publication for *Massaging Himmler: A poetic biography of Dr Felix Kersten*. She and her partner, the pianist Julian Bailey, present a concert version of this work with the whole set of Rachmaninov Preludes Op 23.



from Massaging Himmler: A poetic biography of Dr Felix Kersten

KONIGEN WILHELMINA DER NEDERLANDEN GIVES A TESTIMONIAL¹

Den Haag, de Nederland, 1928

Doktor Kersten is recommended to us by friends
and I request his attendance at the Palace in Den Haag.

My husband, the Prince, is gravely ill, confined
to bed, too weak at times to lift his head. Our

Doktors give him only six short months. Dr Kersten
consents to a consultation, uses his skill to boost

the nerves which feed the heart. My husband revives
– a miracle to see colour in his cheeks, him strong

enough to make a jest. He resumes his work, lives a
vibrant life, cherished consort to the Queen. We urge

Felix to make his home here in Den Haag. In honour
of his service, to secure his future aid, I appoint him

Hofarts – Physician to the Queen. Dutch by ancestry,
it pleases him to have won court favour. He sets up

residence, takes on further clientele – royal appointment
is imprimatur. We owe the greatest debt to Doktor

Felix Kersten – when hope of normal life was gone,
Hendrik survives, thrives – my husband and my Prince.

HIMMLER DESCRIBES THE CATHEDRAL OF LIGHT

Sixth Party Congress, Nürnberg, September 1934

I am astounded at the impact of those
152 vertical light-beams rising pale

like marble pillars into the night sky,
a monumental building, constructed

before our very eyes. None of the magic
lost on me, despite knowing in advance –

when those searchlights are switched on
they light me up inside as well as

the Nürnberger dark. Out of the insubstantiality
of only-light, Hitler's magnificent vision,

his *Tausendjähriges Reich*, is made real
and grand before us. Magnificent, as he is.

Rapture infuses the faces of the Volk, primal
oohs and aahs of wonder and exaltation

from the 700,000 throats, entranced one
and all. They are simple, the Volk, they need

basic pictures painted for them, a future
made visible. It might be Speer who designs

such grandeur but, I reassure myself, he is
a mere tool Hitler uses to dress his dreams.



¹ This incident from Kessel J. (Translated by Denise Folliot), *The Magic Touch*. Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1961, p 32

Daniel Wade is a poet from Ireland. His poetry has been published in *Optic*, *Limerick Revival*, *Wordlegs* (e-publication), *The Stony Thursday Book* (ed. Paddy Bushe), *HeadSpace Magazine*, *the Seven Towers 2014 Census*, *the Bray Arts Journal*, *The Sea* (charity anthology in aid of the RNLI), *Sixteen Magazine* (e-publication), *The Bogman's Cannon*, *Iodine Poetry Journal*, *Zymbol*, *The Runt*, *Headstuff*, *The Fredricksburg Literary Review*, *The Lonely Crowd*, *A New Ulster*, *FLARE*, and the *Hennessey New Irish Writers' page* of the Irish Times.



III. VENICE, ITALY

It's not what I expected to remember, but I do:

A hectic flotilla of vapoetti clearing the waterway
For a cruise ship larger than the harbour itself:
The weighed bustle of anchors, engines revved
To afterburn, wakes in foamy collision. Swarming
Madly at untold knots, they pave a white-capped path
For the pearly hulk, cruising on company charter;
For Neptune, wetting his lip before fine-tuning his conch;
For his melodic blare, luring the waves landward.

Like all tourists, I'd made my seasonal invasion. Aircraft,
City Night Line, and vaporetto brought me to Venice's
Heat-sodden heart, where the sun worked overtime,
Gaining the traction of anchors without chains.
My guidebook showed the path taken by long-dead pilgrims.
Vivaldi chestnuts, adapted for clarinet, polished the plaza
Back to peace, the melody slithering on reeded brass,
The double bass throbbing like an upright grampus.
A cello's gracious moan plunged in baroque rubato.

*

In a riverside teashop, out of the lion's yawning sight,
My stainless knife and fork trussed in a serviette
Of wine-proof gauze, I nursed surf-cold Peroni,
Watching antic boats ply the olive lagoon.
Wait for it: the embroidered light, kindling for dusk.
Wait for it: tables and chairs scuppered in azure overspill.
The city's trademark regality. The ship's magnitude
Halted me, her Olympian prow delving the air.
On her main deck, two hundred feet above sea level,

Thousands were massed. My breath evaporated.

The ship dwarfed Venice, carving the skyline in two.
Steeple shored up the sea-laced sky, sheer
As a mirror. A coven of gondolas huddled at the water's edge.
In the virile afternoon, they all, downriver, amassed:
Oarlocked sandolos, galleys rigged by scraps of lateen,
Vaporetto motoring in and around the surf-heavy wharfs,
Razored prows cleansed by a wink of quicksilver.
But this wasn't the city publicized by guidebooks,
Where mercy is trafficked in industrial measure.

I gauged the distance I had to keep my aghast eyes from bulging.

I think my hand climbed to my brow, blotting out
The sun-kissed glare, as if to give full salute.
In Venice, it's hardly an unusual sight, a cruise ship
At low speed steering her course, the current unsealed
Like grey lattice. Yet I couldn't help but sigh the word
'majesty' in *sotto voce*, the watertight tableau of power
Anchoring my gaze the way no painting ever could.
The canal's bottle-green arm glistened like tonic.

From the quay, without a bottled warning to keep my cool,

I felt the dewy obsession of unripe years
Thaw from its vernal sleep and leak once more
Through my bones, as it has continued to since,
Tunnelling my blood, my bilges of silence.
I wanted life to grip me, the way rushing tides grip
A hull, the way a sail thrusts itself to the wind.
I didn't want to stay put, moored to a relic quay
Where my spirit would be a horn cleat's girdling.

*

continued overleaf...

III. VENICE, ITALY *continued...*

I frowned into my beer, like an inexorable moneylender
 Who bids, unsparingly, that justice be paid in the flesh.
 Truly, *this* was Venice. The last *real* thalassocracy.
 Seaworthy as the ships she harboured, every bridge
 And basilica sinkable as the princely Bucentaur, with her
 Taffeta trimmings and frilled stern castle lying a-hull
 To the bronze horizon, oarsmen grunting in chorus
 With each heavy jab at the water, the perfumed
 Doge preening to starboard, his official hubris gilded
 In the figurehead. So many boats, so many souls

Like the hoary fish ranging the Adriatic, no more kingly
 Than the stones the ocean sucks to its floor.
 Green reflections squirm and swirl, the ship
 Works her seismic alchemy, drawing a crowd
 To the wharf to watch her skulk royally past.
 Isn't this humanity's millstone? To know one's
 Irrelevance and mistake it for wonder, to curse
 Yourself for letting it outweigh you, when your own
 Strength could be reaped as a matter of course?

SAKURA

As you pose for a selfie
 The cherry blossom
 Flutters each of its petals
 Like an eyelash:

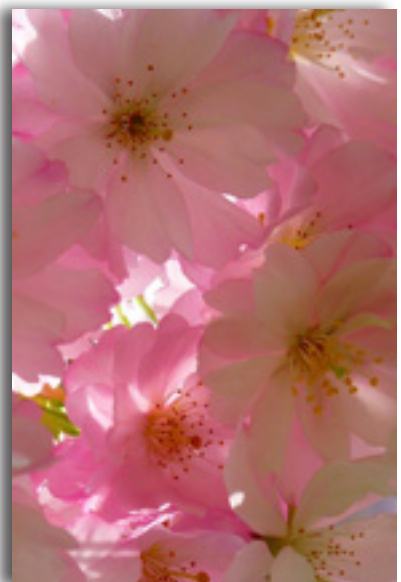
Springtide aurora for you.
 Hips writhing, brow arched,
 You bask in the pink shade
 As if in a house of Japanese prayer,

Your summer dress unfastened.
 There you see a pearl's
 Covert essence in the grass,
 And grow weak at the knees.

Leaves murmur in heat. You lick
 Your lips. Your tanned cleavage,
 Freckled breasts, rosy, Cupid's
 Bow mouth that stirs me

To calm, and your dress, falling
 Loose from your shoulder to a slant -

All ready for the tingle of sakura,
 For raptures in bloom.



Laura Solomon has a 2.1 in English Literature and a Masters degree in Computer Science. Her books include *Black Light*, *Nothing Lasting*, *Alternative Medicine*, *An Imitation of Life*, *Instant Messages*, *Vera Magpie*, *Hilary and David*, *In Vitro*, *The Shingle Bar Sea Monster and Other Stories*, *University Days*, *Frida Kahlo's Cry* and *Brain Graft*. She was short listed for the 2009 Virginia Prize and the 2014 International Rubery Award and won the 2009 Proverse Prize. She has had work accepted in the Edinburgh Review and Wasafiri. She has judged the Sentinel Quarterly Short Story competition. Laura's new collection *Tales of Love and Disability* will be out soon from Woven Words Publishers.

www.laurasolomon.co.nz



THE DOCTORS

The doctors know it all, know best,
Know whether to wait or operate,
When to lock you up or set you free
And how much walking time you shall be granted.

I am at their mercy, or I was,
And hope to never be again.
They have no knowledge of compassion.

What terrible power!
Power of life or death.
One slip of the surgeon's blade and it's curtains;
Or paralysis – the wheelchair, or walking with a cane.

The nurses aren't much better,
They gossip amongst themselves, scatter-brained,
Mocking my ambitions,
While they have none of their own.

This whole episode must be a set-up
Engineered by some malicious god
Playing a prank on me.

Who will have the last laugh?

The cackle's stuck in my voice box,
From upstairs I can hear
Somebody else having a giggle
At my expense;
I am happy to provide the entertainment.

Mind you, at the risk of sounding like a know-it-all,
It must be said that back here on earth
None of them can tell me
Why it grew – this monstrosity
This tumour
This lump inside my head.

FOUR WALLS

Somebody is giving birth in the room next door.
Nine months is up, it's time for the big arrival.

The rest of us are pregnant with the future -
Pregnant with possibilities
Each one opening out – a door to walk through, an invitation.

The midwife arrives bearing oxygen
Which is not needed
More pushing is done,
The umbilical cord is cut – time's up,
Three kilos of perfection is delivered

M. L. Williams is author of *Other Medicines* and co-editor of *How Much Earth: The Fresno Poets*. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in many journals and anthologies, including most recently *Western Humanities Review*, *Miramar*, *The Journal of Florida Studies*, *The Cortland Review*, *Stone*, *River*, *Sky*, and *Clash by Night*. He teaches creative writing and contemporary literature at Valdosta State University.



PRATTLE

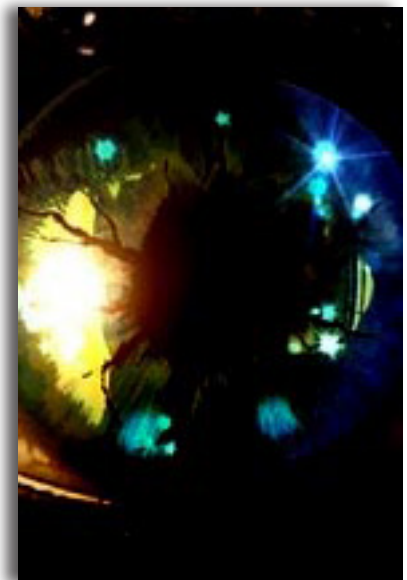
Then what thought is, for example, expressed by the sentence, 'It is raining'?—
Philosophical Investigations 501

"It is raining," you say
 your dog in the cage
 under the oak, the door
 open no it is latched
 the bichon frise, no the
 basenji cannot bark
 it scratches paws
 at the wire under
 sweetgum no the borzoi
 shudders the wet
 coat the ink
 bleeds the cage
 a book under
 bristlecone the
 whimper not
 a thought it is
 raining the warm
 sky pours in
 the image your
 mudi shaking
 is raining cypress
 knees the empty
 crate in your
 eyes I see it
 and turn around
 the car

APHASIA

"For what is hidden, for example, is of no interest to us."
Philosophical Investigations 126

Closed eyes kill the aura
 that cuts off half the hand
 but not the sparking outline
 amoebic or a colleague
 points out an impolitic
 decision you start
 a phrase to answer you
 start a phrase start to
 you are having a stroke
 she says no you can still say
 no you can say
 the unsayable that
 my eyes open halo



Dr Robyn Rowland AO is an Irish-Australian citizen living in Australia and Ireland. Her poetry appears in national and international journals and in over 40 anthologies, including seven *Best Australian Poems*. Of her 9 books, two were published in 2015: *Line of Drift*, Doire Press, Galway, Ireland, and her bilingual *This Intimate War Gallipoli/Çanakkale 1915 – İçli Dışlı Bir Savaş: Gelibolu/Çanakkale 1915*, Turkish translations by Mehmet Ali Çelikel, Five Islands Press - www.fiveislandspress.com and Bilge Kultur Sanat, Turkey.



BUS ACROSS NIGHT TO GÖREME, TURKEY

Heading into dusk, the land has me captive,
moving under us in slow undulations,
the ancient earth, before.
Light is leaving and the desert ahead waits silent.
Yesterday, a thread of bald tarmacadam
pulled us through olive groves,
goats hanging from grey boulders,
donkeys sleek and muscular.
Taurus mountains trawling us,
snow was still varnishing the end of winter.

We left behind fields of sea that sprouted islands.
Old colours of turquoise and indigo
soaking through their waters and skies,
horizon became a melt of blue.
Past orange orchards, strawberry farms
bursting out of red volcanic soil, valleys of green mint;
past country mosques, markets stacked with peaches,
early wheat, pumpkins the size of giant's food.
Past sugar mountains twisted into delight,
past red flags, star and crescent,
past Atatürk a thousand times.

I am in love.

continued overleaf...



BUS ACROSS NIGHT *continued...*

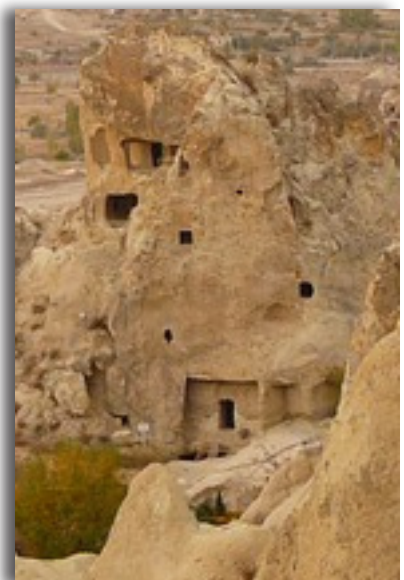
Always happy moving toward, moving,
tall son beside me full of the history of Troy,
of hot gözleme and fresh orange juice from road stops
where the bus is washed clean as a mountain spring.
Tonight children on the bus spoke quietly.
This is a place of patience, respect,
as other country spaces once were.
On this overnight ride, no mobile phones.
Just silence, faint hum of wheels, chirring vibrations of engine.
Sleeping bodies bounce over potholes on soft springs,
steward having brought cake and apple tea.

The dark drifts in as we sway into midnight.
Across the aisle, a fine-boned man remains awake
hand silk-skinned where it lies an arm's length from me,
lovely veins slightly skimming its surface, a delta
from subtle streams. Greying moustache, eyes are
soft brown as his worn suede shoes, suit
a little baggy, old khaki green and brown,
nondescript, its thin mustard stripe barely there.

He's going home, the signs are there –
his body ready in anticipation, his wakefulness.
I think – someone loves that curl of his greying hair,
the wave it took to reach its crest,
faint creases round the eyes, coffee dark,
his wrist at rest, fingers strong and rough-edged,
lands reached after a long journey, after longing.

Beyond him through the window, a salt-white full moon,
huge and marbled-blue, is spreading a shaken-foil pathway
across the lake beneath. Flowing in through the glass frame,
silvering his hair, my arm,
we are scooped into its shining link
on the uneven road to Göreme.

Then, stunned suddenly by a change of light,
together our gaze turns to windows my side of the bus.
A ruby sun rises in tandem with the moon,
a perfection of unearthly balance,
and the pink granite quarry beneath glows roseate in pre-dawn.
His smile is coming like spring, opening, surprised
straight to me, eye to eye.
because of what we saw, what we shared.
No language but lips curving in awe.
It made me breathless, all of it, and I thought –
compared to the riches of Sultans, this would be my choice.



© Robyn Rowland

John W. Sexton lives on the south-west coast of Ireland and is the author of five poetry collections, the most recent being *Petit Mal* (Revival Press, 2009) and *The Offspring of the Moon* (Salmon Poetry 2013). His sixth collection, *Futures Pass*, is also forthcoming from Salmon. Under the ironic pseudonym of Sex W. Johnston he has recorded an album with legendary Stranglers frontman, Hugh Cornwell, entitled *Sons Of Shiva*, which has been released on Track Records. He is a past nominee for The Hennessy Literary Award and his poem *The Green Owl* won the Listowel Poetry Prize 2007. In 2007 he was awarded a Patrick and Katherine Kavanagh Fellowship in Poetry.



THE PISMIRE ENGINES

Not crushed velvet, velvet ant,
but velour with a sting or two;
and eggs to term inside a bee,
a yellow sweet as lemon curdle.

Engine ants, each ant a cog,
each cog an ant of the antbox;
the unborn sleep in their maggot state
to the grumbling nag of the queen's hum.

Space distends in the earthen halls,
Time retards in grit and soil.
Existence blends beneath the lawn;
ships of antmind extricate.

Into space seep shining ants;
the universe is as large as it's small.
Back they'll come before they've gone;
for space is nothing to the antmind.

YOU FREED THE NIGHT

i.m. Leonard Cohen (1934-2016)

you freed the night
of nightingales
of their shouting and their singing
you climbed the village steeples
and freed the bells of ringing

you took the rainbow
from the moon
and turned it into water
you sailed across its shining skin
with every father's daughter

you wore a hat of midnight
a suit of starless sky
the moon was in your pocket
and no one
quite knew why

one night you slept
with Silence
said nothing in return
and Silence took you with her
to where distant heavens burn



© John W Sexton

Donna Prinzmetal is a poet, psychotherapist and teacher. She has taught poetry and creative writing for more than 25 years to adults and children. Donna often uses writing to facilitate restoration and healing in her psychotherapy practice. Her poems have appeared in many magazines including *Prairie Schooner*, *The Comstock Review*, and *The Journal*. Her first book, *Snow White, When No One Was Looking*, was published with CW Books in May of 2014. www.amazon.com/Snow-White-When-One-Looking



THE GOODBYE TRAIN

Some days I can't believe it myself.
It's not how I imagined the world, up on the roof
looking out on the whole unblemished moon,
hearing your voice pulsing in my skull,

your unwashed hair flat against your head,
your head flat against the pillow,
my hand flat against your pale skin.

I have to go over it again and again
but whatever I did or didn't do,
the goodbye train keeps snorting along
murmuring goodbyes in the insufferable light.
I feel so old without you.

"*She's gone,*" I say
to the ophthalmologist, caseworker, pharmacist.
"*I know, it's shocking,*" I mutter
in response to the chorus of sorries.

The goodbye train is gaining momentum.
I can't keep up.
"*Wait,*" I shout, waving my arms, baton-like,
at the disappearing caboose.
"*It's not how I imagined the world,*"
I say out loud
and finish, "*without you,*"

but there is nothing left in its wake
except a dull shimmering
and the vibration on the tracks.

THE DOLLHOUSE

Just when I think I've gotten used to loss
here they are again,
the little doll family:
the mother, the father, the daughter,
the pet gerbil

until the mother loses her footing
and falls down the stairs, until
the father pulls out a Colt and shoots himself,
until the daughter unleashes a blazing scream,
a pink-hair-yanked-out-by-the-roots scream.

On bad nights I see that my whole life happened
without my consent, the doll daughter
searching for her mother in the orchard.
She won't find her.
The garden is barren, empty of mothers.

Most of us know this story,
the story of the trapped family.
Sometimes they escape to the back yard.
Sometimes the dollhouse burns
before the gerbil can be saved.



Hongri Yuan, born in China in 1962, is a poet and philosopher interested particularly in creation. Representative works include *Platinum City*, *Gold City*, *Golden Paradise*, *Gold Sun* and *Golden Giant*. His poetry has been published in the UK, USA, India, New Zealand, Canada and Nigeria.

Translated by Yuanbing Zhang.



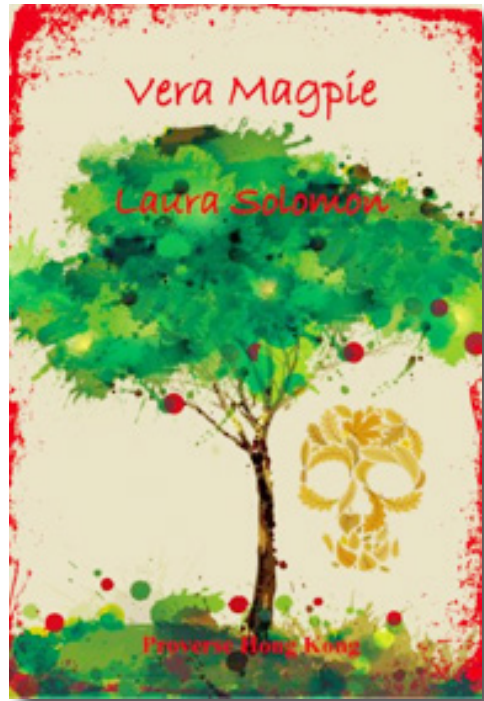
THE SUN OF UNKNOWN NIGHT

I believe that black stones spawn the honey of the heaven
And the death brings us the Golden Dawn
The earth is our other body
While the oceans are initially sweet and serene eyes
My every tear is burning
Bearing diamonds
And when my body is consigned to the flames
Heaven begins to enter my body
At this time I bloom in death
Like the sun of unknown night

PREHISTORIC CITY

The Prehistoric City which I have journeyed in my dream
Those words engraved in gold
Neither ancient Greece nor Rome compare favorably with it
Nor the ancient Egyptian or Mayan civilizations
Perhaps they will return one day
Those giants will set foot on the shores of the future.
The soul of the stars never goes out
They have just hidden in the space of the light





Book available at : www.amazon.com

Tina Shaw has published fiction for adults and young people. *The Children's Pond* was shortlisted for the 2015 Ngaio Marsh Awards, and her children's publishing includes the YA novel *About Griffen's Heart* which was a Storylines Notable Book in 2010. Tina was the recipient of the Creative NZ Berlin Writers' Residency, an experience that contributed to her novel *The Black Madonna*.



REVIEW : VERA MAGPIE BY LAURA SOLOMON

Laura Solomon, in this Fay Weldon-esque novella, looks at female entrapment, in marriage and in the literal sense of being imprisoned, via the unlikely and sometimes unreliable narrator of Vera Magpie. The story blithely opens with, 'I have murdered three husbands.' Vera is currently in prison for being a bit too enthusiastic in knocking off her latest husband.

Like many women who kill, Vera is a product of her own flawed past. This is the story of Vera's life from childhood, and in particular her experiences with abusive men. Raised in a lighthouse under dubious circumstances, young Vera is abused by her stepfather and is bullied at school. She responds by turning mute, and vindictively wetting her pants. 'The lighthouse began to smell like some Barcelona alley.' When her mother discovers the abuse, she kicks out the stepfather, and Bill the fisherman moves in, so life begins to improve, along with the regular provision of smoked mackerel.

From early on, there is an interesting mix of childhood fantasies of adult life and reality, bringing into question which is which. Vera makes friends with Ingrid at high school, and the girls form a band. 'Ingrid did the vocals from behind the drums, like Karen Carpenter, only without the anorexia.' They call themselves the Devon Duo and experience some success: easily a possible dream scenario in Vera's off-beat life.

Next, Vera gets a job in a laundromat in London and paints in her spare time - 'great vistas that I saw in my mind; barren red rocky outcrops like the surface of Mars, jagged Carpathian-style mountains, snowy, crystalline expanses, with the sunlight glinting dangerously off the snow.' There is humour in the juxtaposition of Vera's grandiose landscapes and the prosaic reality of working in a laundromat. Meanwhile, lawyer Libby Clements is going to defend Vera in a retrial, using Battered Women's Syndrome as a defence, and Vera is studying English Literature in prison. The essay topics seem to comment on Vera's own life as a woman: 'Sexual Politics in *Pride and Prejudice*,' 'Gender Politics in the Novels of Margaret Atwood', and 'Innocence Lost in Twentieth Century Literature'.

This perhaps offers an alternative framing of Vera's experiences; and there is the unspoken question of whether Vera would have been more fulfilled as a woman without her marriages.

Just as Vera finds redemption (and some answers to the big questions) through education, so too her new friend Shirley - also in prison for murder - expands her horizons. Previously a hairdresser, Shirley takes inspiration from Vera's example and starts studying genetics, though when she gets out, she'll stick to the hairdressing. 'Genetics is just a hobby - something to occupy my mind.'

The narrator's jokey tone lightens the darker aspects of the novella, as the husbands get knocked off. The first one, Gary the plumber, turns into another kind of abuser once they are married. 'A normal woman would simply have instigated a divorce, but I was no normal woman. I made him one of my special steak, kidney and death cap mushroom pies.'

Then Vera meets Harry Fennel, IT Manager, and they get married. 'A cake as big as a house. A big meringue of a dress with a train as long as Lady's Di's. A big sloppy kiss to seal the deal. I thought I had finally landed on my feet, thought all my Christmases had finally arrived, come chugging into the station. Then I found out about his cocaine habit.' No man is perfect, it seems.

By the time Vera's life finally looks rosy, we have to start wondering about her sanity, as she knocks off husband #3 for apparently no reason except that she has miscarried twins; and as if it is Larry's fault, she poisons him. It is unfortunate for Larry that Vera has acquired a taste for murder.

There is a happy ending for Vera, in the style of one of her own fantasies: the dream becomes reality after all, and there will be no more men - too tempting to knock them off.



Book available at : www.fixingthebrokennightingale.com

Ulyseas has served time in advertising as copywriter and creative director selling people things they didn't need, a ghost writer for some years, columnist of a newspaper, a freelance journalist and photographer. In 2009 he created Live Encounters Magazine, in Bali, Indonesia. March 2016 saw the launch of its sister publication Live Encounters Poetry, which was relaunched as Live Encounters Poetry & Writing in March 2017. His is author of three books - *RAINY: My Friend & Philosopher*, *Seductive Avatars of Maya: Anthology of Dystopian Lives*, and, *In Gethsemane: Transcripts of a Journey*. www.amazon.com www.liveencounters.net/markulyseas



POETIC APHORISMS AND REMEMBRANCES

How does one review a book of poems by a veteran versatile artist? How does one find meaning in the innards of a mini tome? And how does one read the messages coloured into words?

Fixing the Broken Nightingale by Richard James Allen is an anthology of poetic aphorisms and remembrances handpicked from the journey of the poet on the road to himself. The reader is jostled between *Natural Disasters*, *Unanswered Questions*, *Occasional Truths*, *Flickering Enlightenment*, *Scheme for Brightness* and the Epilogue, *Forgotten Nectar in the Sleeper's Cave*.

Attempting to place the poems in categories and with coherent explanations is like herding cats.

The *trains* of thought embedded in the poems seize the reader's mind, turning it like the *London Eye* and offering a panoramic view of all that the poet wants us to see and feel.

*Because between that moment and this
we may never see each other,
perhaps the best we can hope for
is to crowd our emotions
into old cinemas, watch them
flicker and dapple like lights
tossed from ancient projectors,
a little out of focus –
but we won't mind, we'll be tired,
and this will be sufficient
to entertain the audiences
of our sad dreams.*

- To my mistress, from *Two verses found*, by a workman whose name is not recorded, in the bottom drawer of an antique desk in an abandoned villa overlooking the sea.

The Time Machine in the Old House sums it up and leaves the reader contemplating the angst and ecstasy of a wounded poet struggling to keep his head above the lines...lines that he is chained to and condemned to continue drawing into words till his last breath.

*It's a little frightening how the years have passed
And here we are in this same old bed.
We don't seem to have aged at all
But the world has shifted around us.
I am a little afraid to get out
For fear of what I might find
When I put my feet upon the ground –
Who is sick and who is gone
And whatever else has changed.
At a certain point it seems safer
Just to keep on travelling.
Forward, ever forward, in our cocoon in our time ship in our coffin.*

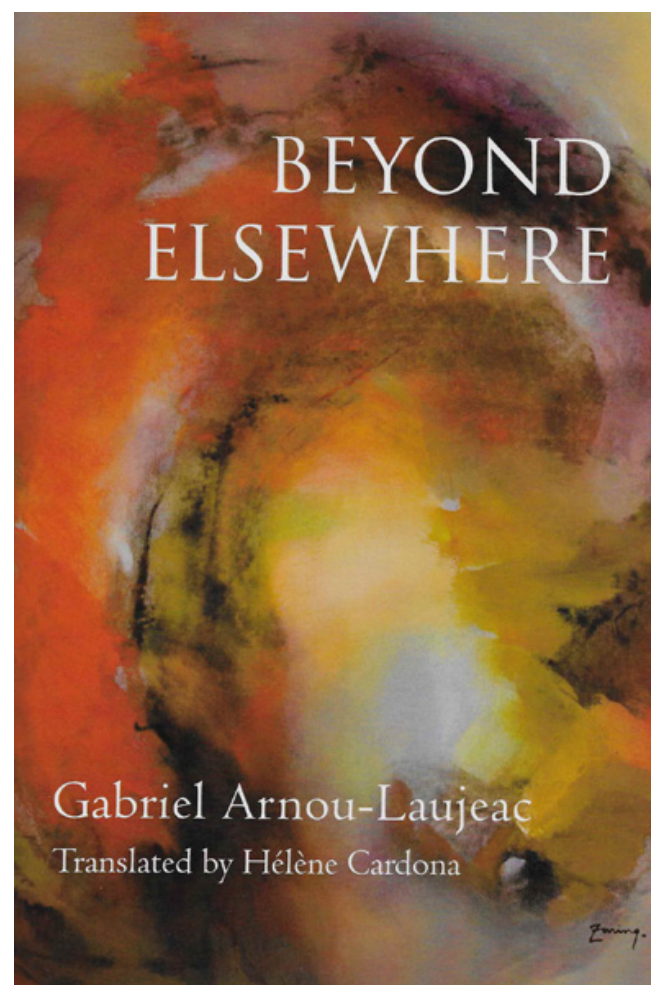
This is a book to read when journaling through the maze of the metaphysical world.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

Hélène Cardona's most recent books include *Life in Suspension* and *Dreaming My Animal Selves* (both from Salmon Poetry); and the translations *Beyond Elsewhere* (Gabriel Arnou-Laujeac, White Pine Press), *Ce que nous portons* (Dorianne Laux, Éditions du Cygne), and, with Yves Lambrecht, Walt Whitman's *Civil War Writings for WhitmanWeb*. She co-edits *Plume* and *Fulcrum*, contributes essays to *The London Magazine*, holds a masters in American Literature from the Sorbonne, taught at Hamilton College and Loyola Marymount University and worked as a translator for the Canadian Embassy. www.helenecardona.com



Two excerpts from *Beyond Elsewhere* (White Pine Press, 2016), recipient of a Hemingway Grant, a narrative poem by Gabriel Arnou-Laujeac, translated from the French (*Plus loin qu'ailleurs*, Éditions du Cygne, 2013) by Hélène Cardona, Poet, Actor, Translator



The first love wards off the specter of a world inhabited by rusty winged adults with collapsed dreams, whose automated arms open before you but no longer close. It takes the place of worldly theater, of a societal lie, of a future with deserted temples and a wrinkled forehead. Curtain. Give way to the sun. To all the rising suns.

Le premier amour conjure le spectre d'un monde d'adultes aux ailes rouillées, aux rêves effondrés, aux bras d'automates qui s'ouvrent devant vous mais ne se referment plus. Il prend la place du théâtre mondain, du mensonge citoyen et d'un devenir aux temples déserts, au front ridé. Rideau. Place au soleil. À tous les soleils levants.

Gabriel Arnou-Laujeac, author of *Beyond Elsewhere* (Éditions du Cygne), has been published in numerous anthologies, including *Petite anthologie de la jeune poésie française* (Éditions Géhess), *Le livre de la prière* (Éditions de l'Inférieur), and many journals, notably *Les Citadelles*, *Poésie Directe*, *Littérales*, *Polyglotte*, *Recours au Poème*, *Testament*, *3è Millénaire* and *L'Opinion indépendante*. He contributed to *Irak, la faute*, with Alain Michel and Fabien Voyer (Éditions du Cerf), graduated from Sciences Po, and holds a masters (*Fondements des Droits de l'Homme*). He also studied philosophy and Eastern poetry. www.gabriel-arnoulaujeac.blogspot.com



I light the lamp of the invisible: she is here.
Even invisible she is here; between words, in them, through
them. She covers the entire page in shadow, ink and light.

She is the rumor that rumbles at the bottom of the
seashell stranded on the beach. Her beauty comes from
elsewhere. She's the sun's song, the moon's sighs, an
endless dream springing from the depths of another
dream with a woman's bust and eagle wings: her, then me
in her; her, then light.

She torments me, entrances me, she is the still virgin
lover, the immaculate seat of an absolute vow that
nothing earthly can fulfill. Even after starlit millennia
within starlit millennia, she still is virgin, every day
reinvented by the formula beyond the grave that lights
the gold of time and the flame of our intangible bodies.

J'allume la lampe de l'invisible : elle est ici. Même
invisible elle est ici ; entre les mots, en eux, à travers eux.
Elle couvre toute la page d'ombre, d'encre et de lumière.

Elle est la rumeur qui gronde au fond du coquillage
échoué sur la grève. Sa beauté vient d'ailleurs. Elle est le
chant du soleil, les soupirs de la lune, un songe d'infini qui
jaillit du fond d'un autre songe avec un buste de femme et
des ailes d'aigle : elle, puis moi en elle ; elle, puis la lumière.

Elle me tourmente, m'aimante, elle est l'amante encore
vierge, le siège immaculé d'un vœu d'absolu que rien de
terrestre ne saurait exaucer. Même après des millénaires
étoilés l'un dans l'autre, elle est encore vierge, chaque
jour réinventée par la formule d'outre-tombe qui allume
l'or du temps et la flamme de nos corps intangibles.

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POETRY & WRITING

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